

# Making Connections: the importance of quality relationships for students of high academic ability.

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and

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# Focus

Gifted perspective:

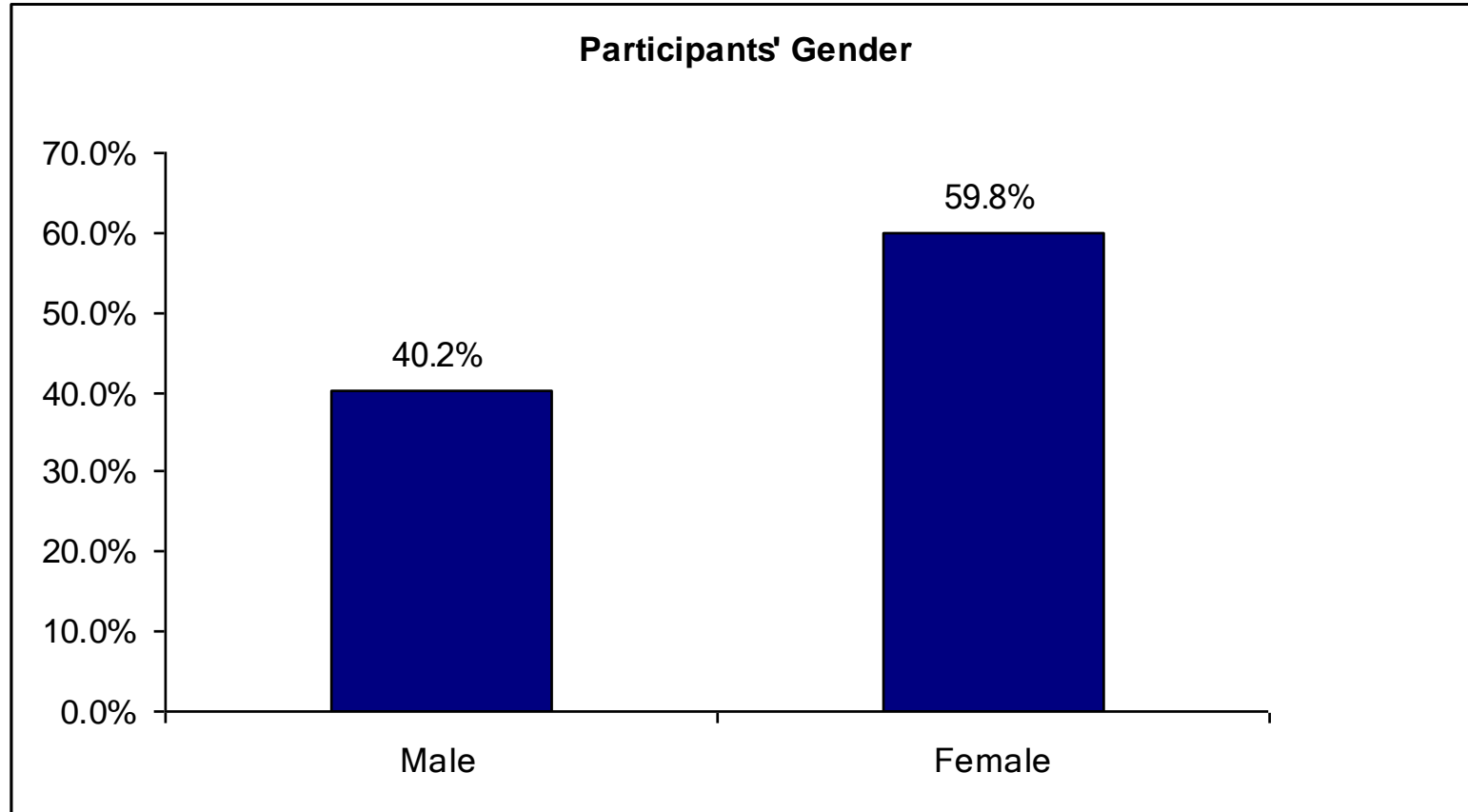
- Essential personal and professional characteristics of effective teachers
- What the research tells us ought to be happening in New Zealand schools
- Acceleration

- Personal or professional characteristics of an effective teacher ...

- *Not all teachers are effective, not all teachers are experts, and not all teachers have powerful effects on students ... [an] important consideration is the way that teachers differ in their influence on student achievement...*

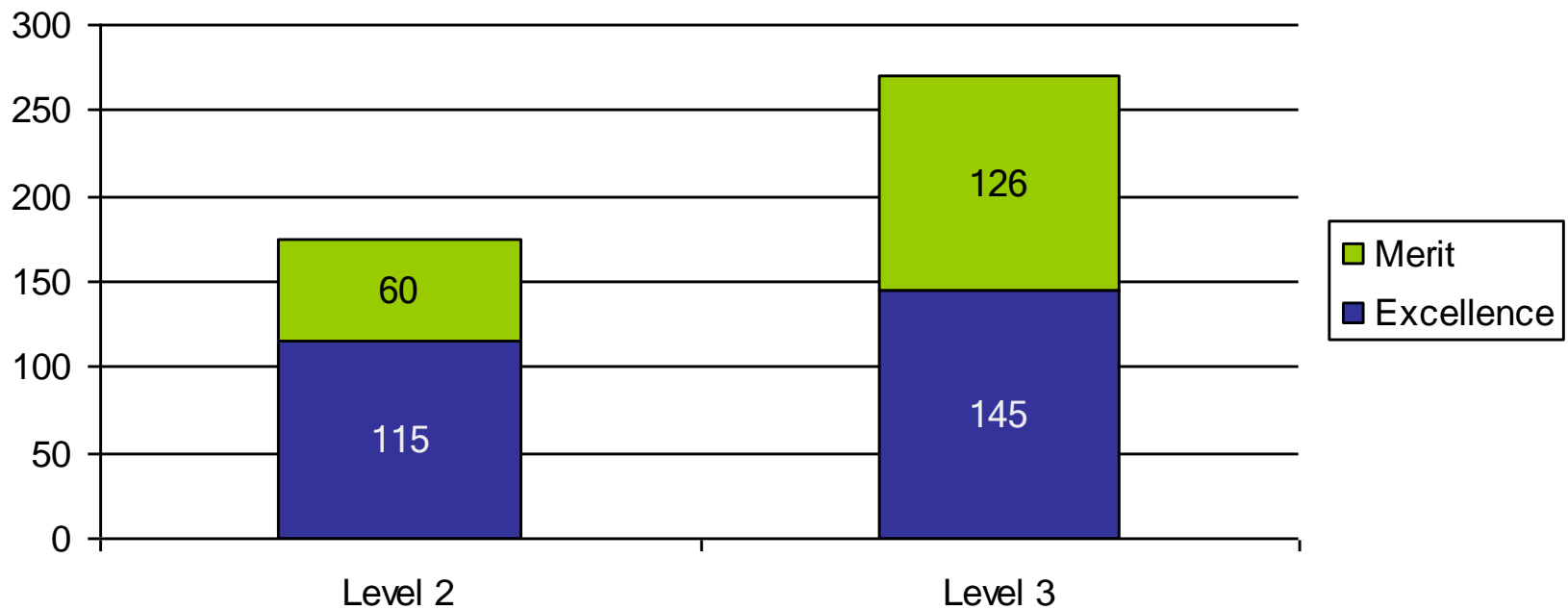
(Hattie, 2009, p. 108)

# Participants

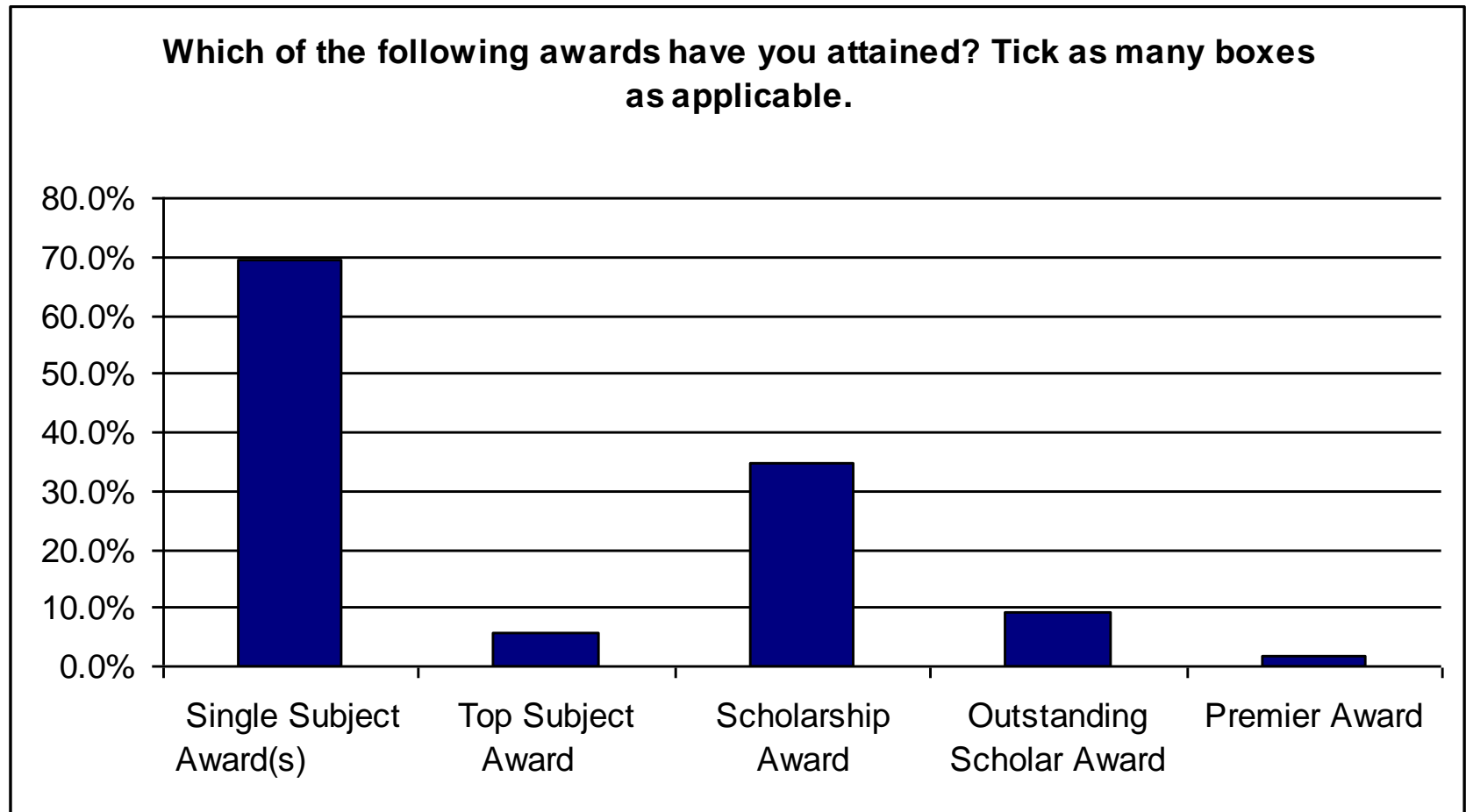


# NCEA Endorsements

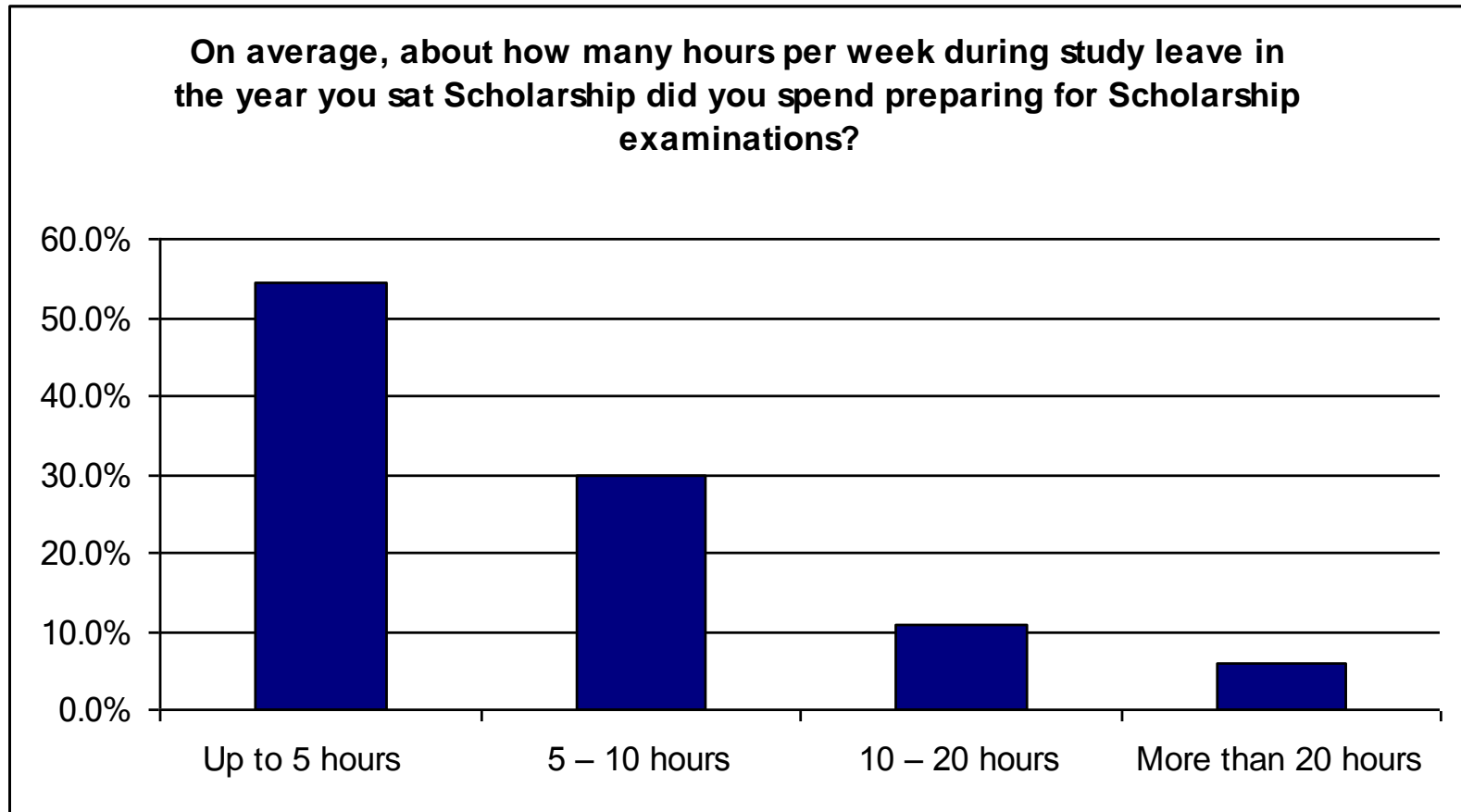
**In 2007 it became possible to have your NCEA certificate endorsed with an overall grade. If you gained an overall endorsement of Merit or Excellence, please indicate in the boxes below.**



# NZQA Scholarships



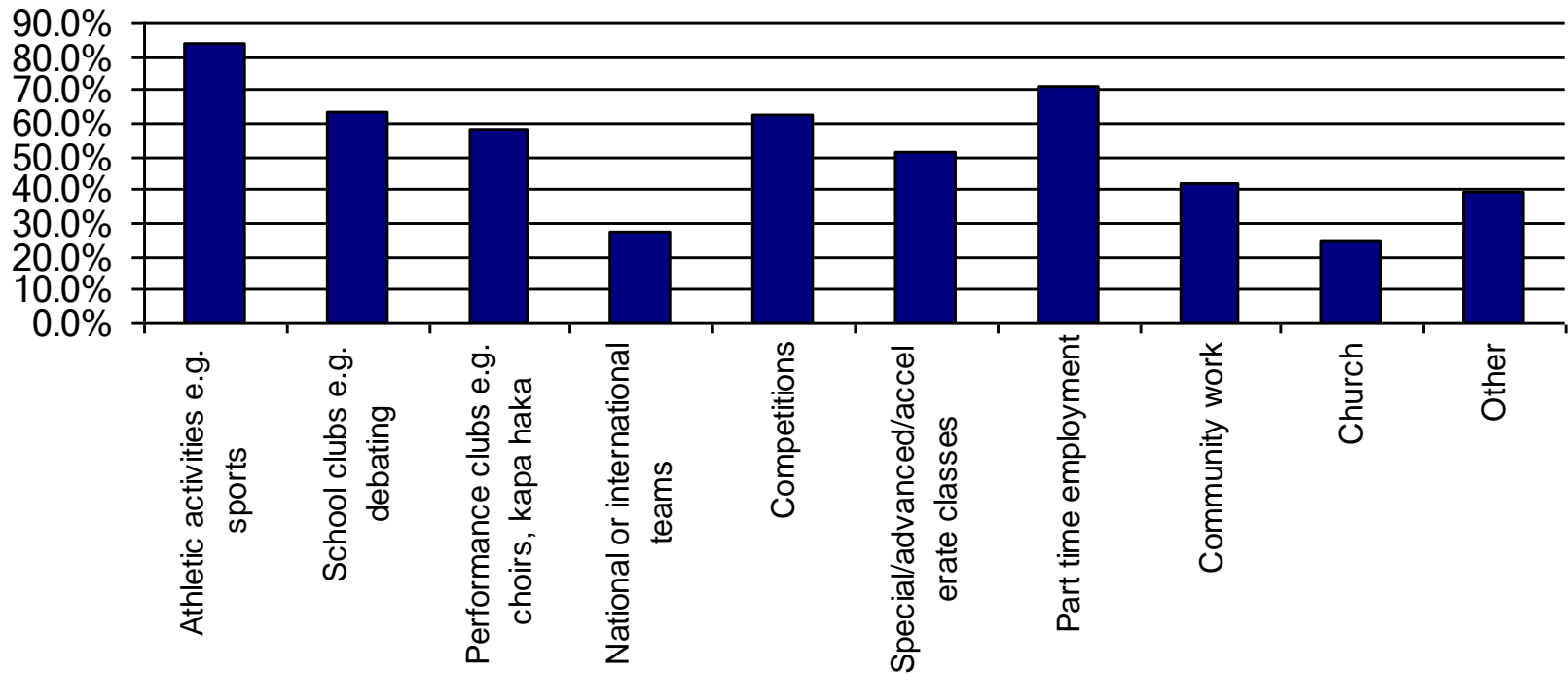
# Study Leave



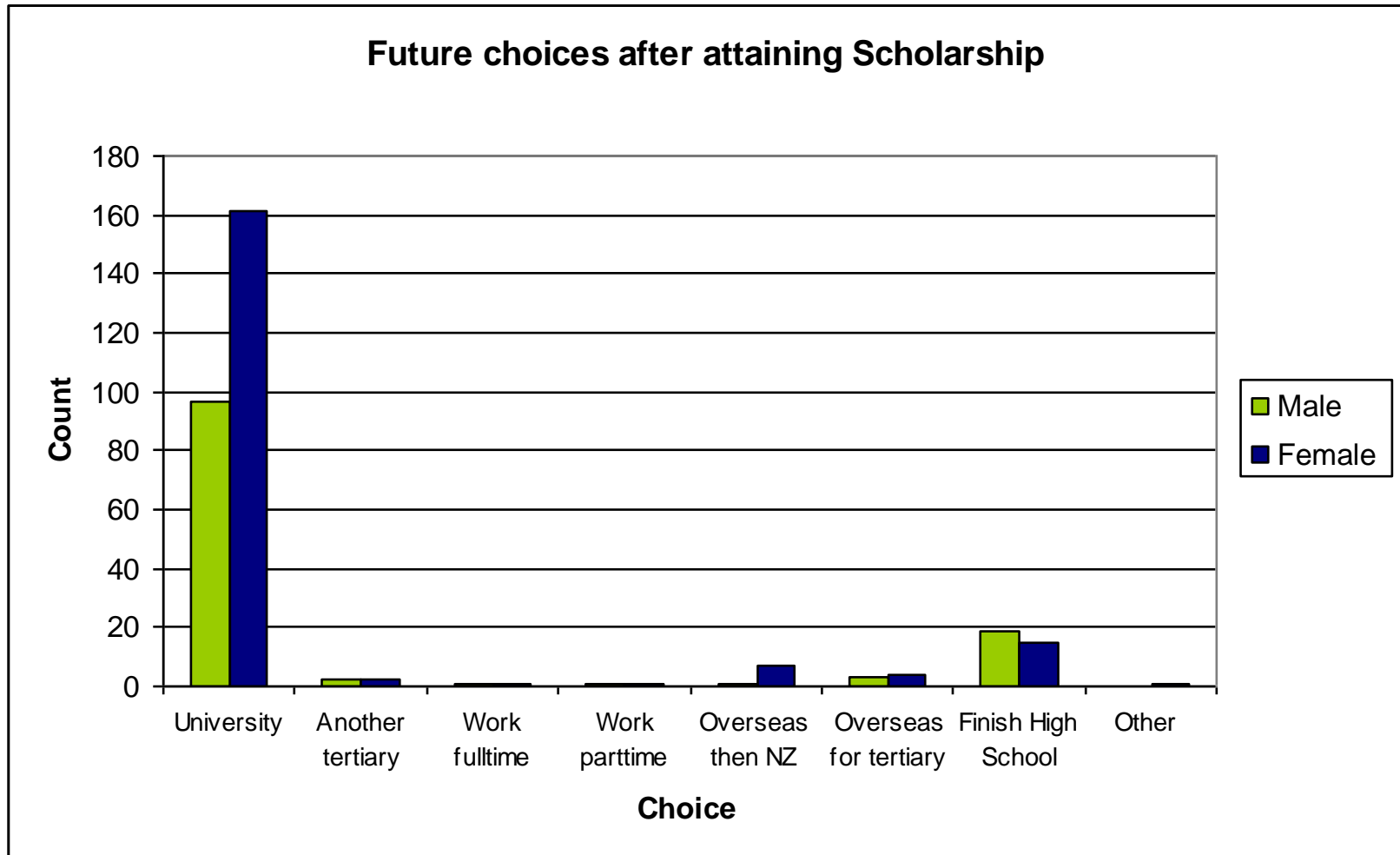


# Activities

Please list any activities you were involved in during your last 3 years at high school.



# Future Choices



# Overall Influences

- Ability
- Effort
- Faith
- Father
- Friend/friends
- Interest & Enthusiasm
- Luck
- Monetary reward
- Mother
- Other
- Parents
- Persistence
- Personal drive
- Sibling
- Teacher

# Loyalty & Inspiration

*...he [the teacher] was extremely enthusiastic about the subject and had very high hopes that I would get scholarship. This made me work harder so that I could meet his expectations.*



*(Female, q4, 2008 survey)*

# Expectations

*...And the stuff that he teaches he goes over a lot of excellence type questions because that's what he expects we'll get ...*



*(Sam, q2, 2008 interview)*

# Belief

*It was my teacher who insisted I had the required qualities and ability to sit the exam. If my teacher hadn't insisted I wouldn't have sat the exam.*

*(Female, q2, 2008 survey)*



*...knowing that a teacher thinks that you can do it is enough motivation to work hard to get it.*

*(Male, q5, 2008 survey)*



# Knowledgeable

- *...she knew the NCEA system really well, like – she could basically predict which questions would come up and help us study specifically for those questions.*

*(Jane, q2, 2008 interview)*

# Sensible

- *I target what I call **SENSIBLE** exam skills. In other words, what you do if you are desperate and you can't think: so that's just your very old fashioned strategy – plot, setting, character, style, structure and themes and you double your questions, 'cos it's your panic mode. And the other thing is to work out your questions, how many paragraphs you've got to write how long, you've got to write...*

(Julia, teacher 2008 interview)



# Authentic

*So you'd get the history that you needed to learn but he'd always be making it interesting and telling stories because he'd lived through most of the stuff we'd be talking about. So he'd be throwing in stories of how he perceived it and things like that, and stories from his own life as well which made the periods interesting and gave it a bit of relevance.*



*(Theo, q3, 2008 interview)*

# Feedback for Learning

*... And she gave constructive criticism which is very successful and she'd give me one on one tutoring whenever I needed it for a couple of weeks before Scholarship I'd go to her and we'd sit down for like 2 hours on weekends and just go over questions and how you can structure answers and I'd write practice essays to give to her and stuff and she'd go over them in her own time. Just putting in that extra yard...*



*(Jane, q2, 2008 interview)*

# Higher Level Questioning

- *She was really good at just adding her opinion – like she was a member of the class, she was in the room, she had an opinion... We felt quite free to either argue against her opinion or agree with her with supporting examples...and she could say "yeah, you can say this but you need an example" and she would often stop us and ask – "where's the example to support this statement?" Especially if someone said something really good she'd say "what's the quote that supports this and how can we justify this answer?"*



(Drew, q3, 2008 interview)

# Adults

*She got the students involved in classes, she treated us more as equals whereas some of the other teachers would just lecture down to us and not get us very involved.*



*(Jane, q2, 2008 interview)*

# Non-contact time

*...our [subject] teacher had weekly Scholarship [subject] questions available. She'd go thru them and all that kind of stuff, every Wednesday lunchtime.*

*(Andrew, q3, 2008 interview)*



*...my History teachers set up a study thing in the holidays and those were really helpful.*

*(Toni, q3, 2008 survey)*



# Supported

*...when I was working at [store name] during the summer months I saw my [subject] teacher she came in and she came over and congratulated me.*



*(Myles, q1, 2008 interview).*

*He emailed me, well done and stuff and we were going to meet up for coffee.*



*(Max, q3, 2008 survey)*

# Interested

*She mentored me and took a personal interest in my successes, and also assured me I was capable of these successes. I always received extra tuition and help when I asked.*



*(Female, q4, 2008 survey)*

# Humour

- *...the classroom should be a place of dialogue – and especially at Year 13 level. I suppose I try through humour, through accepting everything that's offered, to cajoling as well at times, you have to do that – and perhaps in a sense letting them see they are equals in the room and that I'm there more as a facilitator than an expert.*

(Tony, teacher 2008 interview)



# Passionate

*I was lucky enough to have an amazing teacher in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> form. ... was enthusiastic, passionate, supportive, intelligent, perceptive, and inspired me to do well in the subject. She had a unique ability to make learning fun, and make her students determined to achieve.*



*(Female, q5, 2008 survey)*

- *... it was more about her personality...her personality was just passionate about geography, passionate about her students, passionate about success, rather than you, know drilling people with content knowledge ...* *(Myles, q1, 2008 interview)*

# Disappointing

- *My [subject] teacher was pretty slack... He doesn't prepare his lessons, he does not set work for us to do ...it was really disappointing...*



*(Luke, q2, 2008 interview)*

- *.. he's taught [subject] before but only to the Level 3 level. He doesn't have a qualification in that area or anything. ... it's very much a case of us reading out of a text book because he hasn't actually done the paper we're doing... he leaves us with the text book mostly, to learn out of that.*

*(Theo, q3, 2008 interview)*

# Nothing else to do...

- *In general my teachers weren't particularly knowledgeable in their subjects...there were a couple of teachers that just didn't know their subject particularly well, or to the level where they could actually sufficiently teach Scholarship – some teachers were incredibly knowledgeable but just couldn't get the information across in a way that we could understand it ...I know there were a couple who were teaching because they had nothing else to do.*



(Jane, q2, 2008 interview)

# Low aspirations

- *...and he rarely went into the excellence stuff... he said "I mis-judged the class" or something. So I got the feeling he had purposely selected the people he thought were going to cope with the stuff and he just taught them. ...I remember he used to discourage us from getting the 'Aiming for Excellence' workbook and just stuck to the 'Gaining Credits' workbook. Whereas in the other maths class – with a teacher who believed in her students - it was compulsory to have the 'excellence' workbook....*



*(Susie, q2, 2008 interview)*

# School support

- *I had a couple of very good teachers who supported me, but there was a lack of support from management in school and some teachers, so it was particular subject teachers who supported me. (Female, q3, 2008 survey)*

# School support

*...no encouragement of excellence... I don't think they [the school] encourage high achievement, at all. They definitely didn't encourage excellence. ...the school itself had an attitude like, where if you're white, you're rich, you can do Scholarship. If you're Māori, if you're poor you cannot do Scholarship. Since the school has a lot of Māori students, they're really shooting themselves in the foot...*



*(Myles, q1, 2008 interview)*

# Bored

- *My school was terrible at catering for students who are gifted and talented. Without the support of one of my teachers I would have dropped out... school did not assist me in any way and the system is not designed to cater for students outside 'the norm'. ... I felt bored for the past five years in class...*

*(Female, q3, 2008 survey)*

# School support

- *One day I was late for school and a teacher was going to give me a lunch time detention which is when Scholarship classes were. But the DP saw and she said "don't make her do detention because she has Scholarship classes". I think you got it a bit easier because you were doing Scholarship.*

(Lucy, q3, 2008 interview)



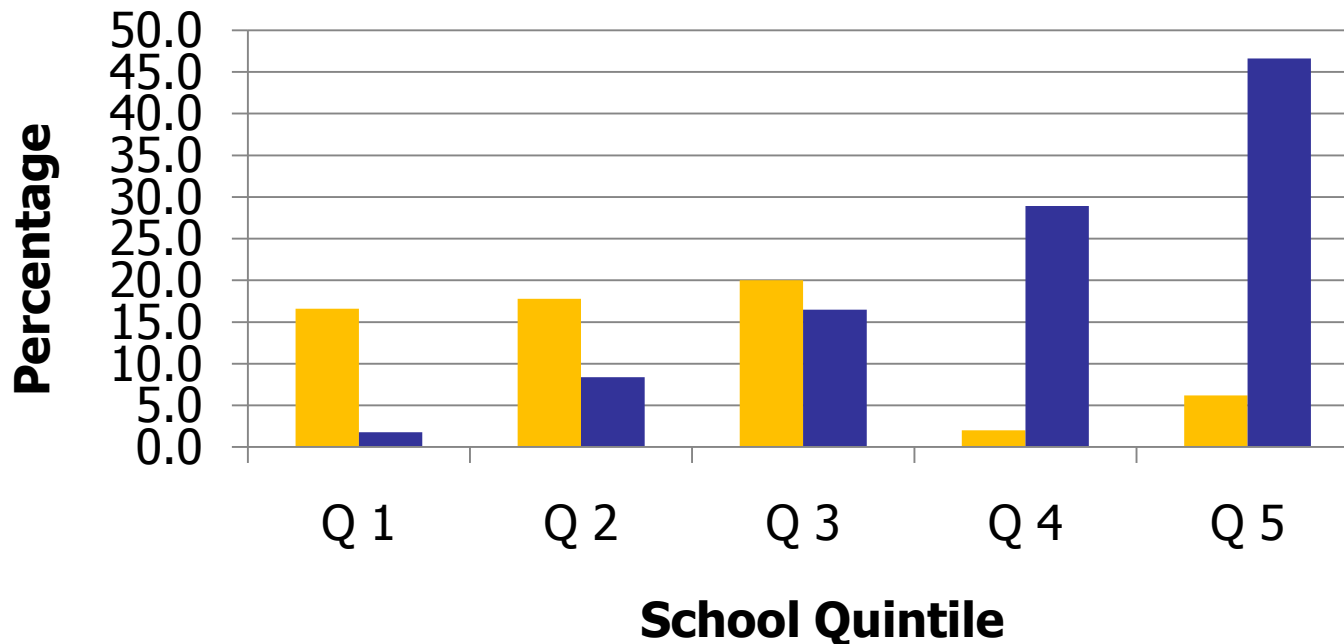
# School support

- *...basically not many people go for it [Scholarship] because they think it's too hard and too much work and like my year started out with a 100 people and at the end of it 12 passed – Level 3 [NCEA]. About 40 people were in the year at the end.*

*Most students here tend to just drop out or go on the dole or work in a supermarket. There's not a great expectation by the community to go to uni or get all that much out of life...*

*(Jane, q2, 2008 interview)*

## Students' Perceptions of Negative Scholarship Experiences



**% of Negative Experiences**

**Quintile as % of data set**

# New Zealand 'gifted' research

ERO identified:

- A link between school leadership support for gifted and talented programmes, and school provision for these students.

(ERO, 2008)

# Key Findings

The majority of schools:

- did not have a shared understanding of GATE;
- had not participated in appropriate professional development, and
- resourcing for GATE was not well informed or planned

(ERO, 2008, p. 16)

# Findings

...three main stages for schools in providing good quality programmes for gifted and talented students:

## 1. A shared understanding about giftedness and talent

Five contributing factors:

- > leadership
- > policies and procedures
- > professional development
- > resourcing, and
- > community involvement

(ERO, 2008, p. 49)

Three stages in providing quality programmes:

2. Good quality provision for gifted and talented students

- > identifying and meeting needs
- > reflecting diversity
- > providing challenging in-class provision
- > assessment, and
- > self review

Three stages in providing quality programmes:

### 3. Positive outcomes for gifted and talented students.

- > valuing of gifts and talents and using them to benefit others
- > achievement and progress
- > pastoral care and social and emotional wellbeing, and
- > involving parents, whanau and community

(ERO, 2008, p. 562)

# International

- *As an educational intervention, academic acceleration is **decidedly effective for high-ability students**. The research support for acceleration that has accumulated over many decades is robust and consistent and allows us to confidently state that carefully planned acceleration decisions are successful.*

(Colengelo, Assouline, Marron, Casatellano, Clinkenbeard et al, 2010)



# Acceleration

- the importance of using a careful selection process to identify those students who would benefit from acceleration
- the need to base the decision on the student's capacity, readiness, and motivation

# Early or dual access to university

*I've been doing all 4 subjects History, Stats, Physics and Chemistry – a year ahead pretty much since the 3<sup>rd</sup> form so I did Level 3 last year and I'm doing university papers in most of them this year.*



*(Theo, q3, 2008 interview)*

*I am a year 11 student so I sat this exam just as a trial to see how well I could do.*

*(Female, q5, 2008 survey)*

# National Standards

- 'Above level' or
- 'Out of level' testing
  - > Using the national standards to gauge student performance on levels above their cohort
    - > E.g. Year 4 assessed using Year 6 standard

- What [untapped] possibility is there in your school for students to be accelerated in one – or several subjects?
- What might need to change to enable this practice to become part of your school procedure for meeting the needs of your most able students?

- Loyalty
- Inspirational
- Knowledgeable: content, system
- Expectations
- Authentic
- Belief
- Learning promoted through feedback
- Elevated levels of questioning

- Perceptive
- Adult
- Success
- Shared
- Interested
- Often used humour
- Non-contact

# Acknowledgements

- Those inspirational students who gained NZQA Scholarship in 2006 & 2007
- The teachers of these students
- Professor Luanna Meyer of Victoria University of Wellington
- Associate Professor Tracy Riley of Massey University

# References

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# 'Other'

- Authors of set texts, boyfriend, classmates who were not necessarily friends, God, grandfather, Jesus, Kapa Haka tutor, myself, one of my competitors, role model, scholarship tutor, singing teacher, stepfather, study group, teachers outside of my school, girlfriend, uncle, violin teacher

# School provisions

- 51% a class or programme that they perceived as having the purpose of providing special provisions to meet the needs of gifted and talented learners